



BREAKING NEWS

Long Beach, California

Issue 2

Sunday, July 6, 2003

Novices Ready to Learn, Improve, and Help Others

By David Jewel

Louis Stokes Cleveland VAMC

As individuals, the athletes attending the National Veterans Wheelchair Games for the first time all have unique stories and reasons for attending. But in listening to a few of them during registration and expo on Saturday, one could hear the common threads of a desire to learn from others, to improve, and ultimately to be of more help to others.



Dale Spiller gets help from volunteers as he goes through classification.

"I'm here to learn from other veterans," said first-time athlete Dale Spiller from Jamestown, Ohio. Spiller is among more than 100 veterans competing at Long Beach in the National Veterans Wheelchair Games for the first time. A combat veteran of the Gulf War and no stranger to athletic endeavors, Spiller said he put off participating in the Games while coaching softball and devoting time to raising his two daughters.

Early on the first day, even before the competitive events had started, Spiller reported that he has learned much and gotten great tips from others attending the Games. Spiller learned about the Games seven years ago while in rehabilitation at the Augusta, Ga., VA Medical Center. Since that time, he has followed the Games through articles in PVA publications. Now living back home in his native Ohio, and receiving his health care from the VA Medical Center in Dayton, Spiller is looking forward to competing in softball and several track and field events.

Air Force veteran David Lund's experiences in winter sports sponsored by the New England PVA in January of this year helped him decide to try the National Veterans Wheelchair Games. Lund, of West Brookfield, Mass., said Mike Gibault of the NEPVA



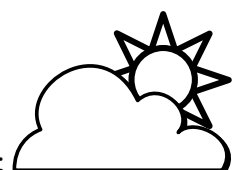
Air Force veteran David Lund prepares to get his photo taken at the Hometown News stop at registration.

encouraged him to attend. "He kept saying that I should give this a try. The fact that it was in such a great location like Long Beach didn't hurt," Lund added. Lund will compete in hand cycling, in the

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**Today's
Weather**

Partly Cloudy;
High 79, Low 64



Welcome to Southern California!

More than 25 local veterans from the VA Long Beach Healthcare System and California Paralyzed Veterans Association registered to compete in the Games this week. All are excited to have you here in Long Beach, and welcome you to their beautiful part of the country. Here's what a few of them had to say:

"These events have brought my family closer together. Knowing I will be competing keeps me attending therapy and gives me the incentive to stay in good shape so I can do a little better each year. The Wheelchair Games have enhanced the quality of my life. I'm able to do activities that I would not have been able to do before. You see so much joy when watching the

veterans compete..." —**Robert Oliver**

"Wheelchair sports are very physical. They make you use your muscles to the max and are very therapeutic. We are really glad the Games are so close to home in Long Beach this year! They make you feel good about yourself. I think the public will enjoy watching these athletes compete. We want to hear those crowds roar!" —**Daniel Palacios**

"I love the National Veterans Wheelchair Games and always look forward to the competition. Competing helps keep me in shape. It sharpens your reactions, makes you think fast, and is good cardio-

vascular therapy. If I can win a medal that's great, but there are always good memories to bring back home as well." —**Robert Soto**

"Meaningful competition puts you on a whole new plateau. It helps you remember your own self-worth. Veterans should participate in these events so they don't just sit around and get depressed. When they get out there and find this high-intensity competition, they'll discover a whole new frame of mind. They will start getting into a healthy lifestyle. Everyone should come out to see the events. Don't have sympathy for these athletes, come watch them compete and give it their all. You will be positively changed by the experience!" —**Jemal Williams**

DME and Wheelchair Repair

Durable Medical Equipment (DME) rooms will be available at all hotels to pick up and drop off equipment. Wheelchair Repair will be located in the Westin Hotel only. If your wheelchair needs repair, you should go to the Westin Hotel. If the repair is an emergency or occurs after-hours, you should contact the Hotel Team Leader or the Co-Team Leader at the phone numbers listed below at each of the hotels. They will contact Wheelchair Repair to come to your hotel.

Athletes are reminded to bring your VA identification card in order to receive DME. There is a \$10 per equipment refundable deposit when you check out the equipment. Please inform the DME specialist when you pick up your equipment if you will need it dropped off at your hotel room. Athletes must let the DME staff know if you will be returning the equipment yourself, or if you will need to have it picked up from your room after the Games.

If your pick-up or delivery situation changes, please contact the Hotel Team Leader or Co-Team Leader. If no DME was requested for you, your name will be placed on a waiting list, and it will be issued on a first-come, first-served basis once all of the athletes who requested DME have picked it up. Exchanges for equipment can be made, but this will also be on a first-come, first-serve basis.

You will be given your DME loan form at the time you pick up your equipment. Please bring this with you when you return the equipment and/or have it attached to the DME upon pickup. If the DME is not returned, a bill of sale will be created and mailed to the Team Coach. Once the DME is returned, the Hotel Team Leaders will mail the refundable deposit to you after the Games.

Hotel Co-Team Leaders: Hilton (Mediterranean, Pacific I/II Rooms) - Sue Kulvinskis (Cell phone: 562-244-8929); Westin (Tokyo, Vancouver, Shanghai Rooms) - Realean Maxwell (Cell phone: 562-244-8936)

DME Chair: Gina De Ocampo (Cell phone: 562-244-8906)

• Today's Schedule •

7:30–8:30 a.m.	Late Registration		L.B. Convention Center
8 a.m.	Softball		Long Beach VAMC
	Bowling	IV-V	Cal Bowl
	9-Ball	IA, IB, IC	L.B. Convention Center
10 a.m.	Air Guns		L.B. Convention Center
1 p.m.	Air Guns		L.B. Convention Center
	Softball		Long Beach VAMC
	Bowling	II-III	Cal Bowl
	9-Ball	IV-V	L.B. Convention Center
	Slalom	IA, IB	L.B. Convention Center
3 p.m.	Air Guns		L.B. Convention Center
	Slalom	I C, & motorized (head/mouth)	L.B. Convention Center
5 p.m.	Quad Rugby Clinic		L.B. Convention Center
6:30 p.m.	Basketball	Games 1, 2, 3, 4	Cal. State Univ. Long Beach
	Bowling (<i>ramp</i>)		Cal Bowl
7 p.m.	Air Guns		L.B. Convention Center
	Quad Rugby	Games 1, 2	L.B. Convention Center
8 p.m.	Basketball	Games 5, 6	Cal. State Univ. Long Beach

Shuttle Schedule for Today

TIME	EVENT	DESTINATION
6:30 a.m.-11 p.m.		Hilton/Convention Center/Hilton
6 a.m.-11 p.m.	Bowling	Convention Center/Cal Bowl
6 a.m.-11 p.m.	Bowling	Hilton/Cal Bowl/Convention Center
6 a.m.-5 p.m.	Softball	Convention Center/VAMC/Convention Center
6 a.m.-5 p.m.	Softball	Hilton/VAMC/Convention Center
4:30 p.m.-11 p.m.	Basketball	Convention Center/CSULB/Convention Center/Hilton



Medical Assistance

Hotels: A medical suite will be fully operational through Thursday at the Westin and Hilton Hotels. The rooms will be open from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. for treatment of minor injuries and illnesses. Look for signs to direct you to the medical suite, or call the hospitality desk for directions. After hours, a Games physician will be on call, and can be reached by calling the hotel operator. In the event of a life-threatening emergency, dial the hotel operator to call 911. There will not be a medical suite at the Hyatt; however, a Games physician will be on call each night. For services needed during the daytime hours, call or visit the medical suites at the Westin, Hilton, or Convention Center.

Convention Center: A medical room in Suite 301 on the Seaside Meeting Level at the Convention Center will be staffed from 7 a.m. until the last event is completed each evening.

Games Sites: Medical staff will be present at each Games venue. They can easily be identified by their red T-shirts with the white cross on the back. The medical personnel can care for minor injuries. A severe injury/illness will be referred to the VA Long Beach Medical Center.

The medical staff will not be able to provide attendant care services, but have a list of agencies you may call if needed.



After arriving yesterday, everyone headed over to the Long Beach Convention Center Parking Lot for one of the classiest tailgate parties Long Beach has ever seen.

Kicking Off With a Bang ... and Burgers!



This group contemplates going back for seconds ...



Cowabunga dude! It's great getting together here in Long Beach.

Groovin' ... on a sunny Long Beach afternoon.



Say cheese!

Attention Athletes!

Show Your Spirit with a Nomination! Since 1987, one athlete has been selected each year at the National Veterans Wheelchair Games for the "Spirit of the Games" award. This very special award is given to an athlete who clearly demonstrates not only athletic competence, but also sportsmanship and strength of character. Do you know someone who meets these qualifications? If so, please nominate him or her for the 2003 Spirit of the Games award. A nomination form is included with this newsletter, and may be given to a national official, a member of PVA's Sports and Recreation staff, or dropped off in the Command Center. All ballots are due by 8 a.m. on Tuesday. Help us recognize our outstanding athletes by submitting a nomination today!

Attention Ramp Bowlers More than 120 veterans originally registered for ramp bowling this year! Because of these large numbers, you can bowl early if you arrive at the bowling alley before the 6:30 start time. Officials will be there all afternoon, so you can bowl from 4 p.m. on. This will help streamline the numbers later on, so "strike" out for the Cal Bowl today.

Meals for bowlers, softball and basketball players Bowlers competing in the morning session should return to the Long Beach Convention Center for lunch. Bowlers competing in the afternoon session will be fed lunch at Cal Bowl. Softball players will receive their lunch at the venue site, Long Beach VA Medical Center. Basketball will begin at Cal State University, Long Beach, starting at 6:30 p.m.; therefore athletes should plan on eating dinner early at the Long Beach Convention Center. Dinner will be served beginning at 4:30 p.m.

Anaheim Angels vs. Kansas City Royals Baseball Game 75 wheelchair athletes will each receive 2 tickets to attend an Anaheim Angels vs. Kansas City Royals baseball game on Tuesday evening, July 8, at Edison Stadium. Enter for the drawing at the Hospitality Desk in the Main Lobby of the Long Beach Convention Center. Drawing will be held at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday. All entries must be received by noon, Sunday, July 6.

Awards Presentations During the Wheelchair Games, awards are presented two ways: **Immediate awards** are presented as soon as results become available at the venue site at the following events: **basketball, softball, quad rugby, and weightlifting.** **Delayed awards** are presented for all other events throughout the day on the Awards Platform in the Main Lobby of the Long Beach Convention Center. A schedule of award presentations will be available at the Awards Platform. Generally, awards will be presented on Sunday, between 2 and 6 p.m.; Monday and Tuesday between 10 a.m. and 8 p.m.; and Wednesday between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. Last chance to pick up your award is Wednesday at 5 p.m. at the Awards Platform. Scores will be posted as they become available in the Main Lobby and the Internet Cafe at the Long Beach Convention Center.

Handcycle Demo Days Representatives from Invacare and Freedom Ryder will be on hand to demonstrate the latest handcycles at El Dorado Park, Long Beach, on Sunday, July 6 and Monday, July 7, from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Directions for El Dorado Park were included with the other venue sites in the athletes' package. Follow the signs for the Demo. Vehicle entry fees are \$3.00 for cars or \$5.00 for buses.

Veterans History Project Interviews

The Veterans History Project at the Library of Congress was created on Oct. 27, 2000, by a unanimous vote of Congress and seeks to collect and preserve recorded memories of America's wartime veterans. The project collects audio- and video-recorded interviews, as well as letters, diaries, photographs, and other personal documents and preserves these stories of experience and service for future generations. For those who signed up at registration to record their stories, interviews will be conducted in Room 308A. The schedule is currently full, but there may be cancellations, so stop by and ask.

On the Menu ...



Breakfast (6 to 8:30 a.m. at Convention Center, 6:30 to 8 a.m. at Hilton):

scrambled eggs with smoked bacon; breakfast potatoes; fresh fruit/cups, assorted breakfast breads; assorted dry cereals; orange, tomato and grapefruit juice; coffee and tea.

Lunch (11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.):

fried chicken; chef's potatoes; corn cobbles; cole slaw; cornbread; apple pie; iced tea, lemonade, punch and coffee.

Dinner (4:30 to 7 p.m.):

old-fashioned pot roast with carrots and onions; California mixed green salad; garlic mashed potatoes; medley of fresh vegetables; assorted breads and rolls; cheesecake with fruit topping; iced tea, lemonade, punch and coffee.

Local Athletes Thrilled to Have Games Close to Home

What's so great about having the 23rd National Veterans Wheelchair Games in Long Beach, Calif., this year? Sure, we have great weather and the beautiful Pacific Ocean out our windows, but ask the local athletes what makes it special for them, and two things stand out—extending their hospitality to their fellow veteran athletes from past Games and sharing the experience with their family and friends.

Ron Amador, from nearby Huntington Harbor, is excited that the 23rd National Veterans Wheelchair Games are being held close to home. As president of the California chapter of the Paralyzed Veterans Association (CPVA) and vice president of the national PVA organization, he's thrilled to be co-

hosting this year's Games. "This week we gather to celebrate and honor a key aspect of our commitment to society—sports—as it demonstrates to the world our vitality and independence."

Mike Trujillo, from Huntington Beach, says Long Beach offers visitors "great weather, excellent accommodations, and a lot of things to do outside of the competitions. There are a lot of new places to see since the Games were here in 1989 and we're anxious to show everyone the area!"

For many local athletes, sharing the week's activities with family and friends is what's best about the Games being held locally. Ron Monzon grew up in this area and he's glad his family will be able to

watch all the different events. He credits the city of Long Beach with being easily accessible and going out of their way to be hospitable. Monzon's personal perspective focuses on the families of veterans who, he feels, also benefit from meeting each other and seeing their loved ones compete.

Robert Oliver, also from Long Beach, agrees, saying, "These events have brought my family together." Oliver is excited that his family members and friends will be able to watch him compete.

The value of having family around him this week is also shared by Jamal Williams of Inglewood, who looks forward to having family members and friends watch him compete—many for the first time since his injury in 1999. Williams, too, emphasizes the importance of family and friends sharing the competitive goals of the athlete and cheering them on at the Games. Families and friends should become "one with the athlete, serve as their trainers and coaches and get involved," he says. Jacqueline Botello from inland Moreno Valley, competed for the first time in 1989, the last time the Games were held here in Long Beach. Botello encourages the community to support the Games. "When you experience this event, you will walk away with a true deep appreciation of living life to its fullest," she says. Botello's outlook on life through the Games gives her a unique perspective as a life coach for high school students at risk.

Though family and friends were mentioned most often, let's not forget the competitive nature of our athletes. As Daniel Palacios said, "We really do want to hear those crowds roar!"—*Rachel Alcocer, VA Long Beach Healthcare System*

Novices (cont.)

first year that hand cycling has moved from an exhibition event to a medal competition. He also will be competing in air guns and slalom events.

First-time participant Enrique Cottotolentino ("Cotto"), of Carolina, Puerto Rico, credits the persistence of a friend with getting him to the Games. That friend is none other than 1995 Spirit of the Games award winner James Torres. "It's wonderful to see the unity of the athletes. I'm here to improve myself and then help others improve," said Cottotolentino. A combat veteran of the Vietnam War, Cottotolentino has been working out in preparation for competing in weightlifting, swimming, bowling and field events. He is already looking forward to next year's Games. One change he already plans for next year: "My wife will definitely come with me to St. Louis."



Enrique Cottotolentino, of Carolina, Puerto Rico, goes through classification yesterday. He'll compete in weightlifting, swimming, bowling and field events.

Bo Derek Here at the Games Tomorrow

Film star Bo Derek will be here tomorrow visiting with athletes. Running on the beach in the 1979 smash hit “10,” Derek entered American pop culture and became the standard for the “perfect 10 beauty.” More than two decades later, Derek has proven that her beauty goes deeper, as she devotes her time to caring for other people as well as animals.

Derek’s compassion for animals led her to create “Bless the Beasts,” a line of pet products sold in stores nationwide. A humanitarian, Derek donates a portion of all sale proceeds to Canine Companions for Independence, a non-profit organization that enhances the lives of people with disabilities by providing to them highly trained assistance dogs and ongoing support.

However, her compassion for people with disabilities goes beyond Canine Companions for Independence. Derek also serves as the national honorary chairperson for the Department of Veterans Affairs National Rehabilitation Special Events. These therapeutic and rehabilitative events are designed to help veterans overcome their disabilities through competition. They are the hallmark of rehabilitation in the nation.

Born Mary Cathleen Collins here in Long Beach, Derek is no stranger to veterans. Her father, Paul Collins, was a radio operator during the Korean War. Both her stepfather and her late husband, John Derek, were also veterans. It is this appreciation for the armed forces that has inspired Derek to perform her duties as national honorary chairperson with passion and ease, taking the time to meet and encourage veterans, one by one.

In 2002, Derek was bestowed by the Special Forces Association with the distinction of honorary Green Beret. She joins only four other Americans who have been so honored—entertainers John Wayne, Martha Ray, and Wayne Newton, and the author of *The Green Berets*, Robin Moore. Derek was recognized for her

efforts on behalf of America’s men and women in uniform, and our military veterans. She participates in USO tours, entertaining U.S. military personnel serving abroad.

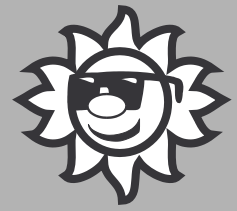
Along with her devotion to veterans, Derek is a patron of the arts. In January 2002, President George W. Bush appointed her to the Kennedy Center Board of Trustees.

Now a published author, Derek poured into *Riding Lessons: Everything That Matters in Life I Learned from Horses* the essence of her beauty—a radiance resulting from her caring heart and bright mind. More than twenty years after she first seared the American consciousness with her image, Bo Derek is as captivating and as ravishingly beautiful as ever, both inside and outside.

More Special Guests

Bo Derek is not the only special guest scheduled to visit athletes at tomorrow’s events. Others include VA Secretary **Anthony J. Principi**, accompanied by U.S. Congresswoman **Juanita Millender-MacDonald (D-Calif.)**.

Beat the Heat

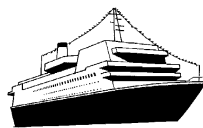


This is sunny California, so it’s important to take precautions to protect yourself from the effects of that strong summer sun when you’re participating in outdoor events. Here are some tips to keep in mind:

- Drink plenty of fluids both before and during your event.
- Wear sunscreen and a hat whenever possible.
- Stay in the shade as much as possible before your event.
- Bring a towel to dry off and a clean shirt to change into so that you can stay dry.
- Wear loose clothing.

If you feel any of the following signs of heat-related illnesses, make sure that you drink water, get out of the sun and get medical help immediately: dry mouth, weakness, nausea, clammy skin or confusion.

Discovering Long Beach



Queen Mary
1126 Queens Highway
Long Beach, CA 90801
Phone: (562) 435-3511
Open daily from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Located just across the harbor from Aquarium of the Pacific, this 81,237-ton passenger liner that entered service in 1936 was retired in 1967 and arrived in Long Beach, where it is permanently moored. Self-guided tour takes you to the bridge, ward rooms, officer’s quarters, engine rooms and upper decks.

The guided tour takes you to areas otherwise off limits to the general public. The 365 staterooms now serve as a hotel.